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ETCHINGS & DRY POINTS.

VENICE.

Second Series.



J. MCNEILL WHISTLER.

Tite Street, Chelsea.

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INSTITUTION

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ETCHINGS & DRY POINTS.

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J. MCNEILL WHISTLER.

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MR. WHISTLER

AND

HIS CRITICS

—ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THE LITERARY

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MR. WHISTLER

AND

HIS CRITICS.

“ Out of their own mouths shall ye judge them.”

"Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?"



"His pictures form a dangerous precedent."—

VENICE.

"Another crop of Mr. Whistler's little jokes."
Truth.

1.—MURANO—GLASS FURNACE.

"Criticism is powerless here."—*Knowledge.*

2.—DOORWAY AND VINE.

"He must not attempt to palm off his deficiencies upon us as manifestations of power."—
Daily Telegraph.

3.—WHEELWRIGHT.

"Their charm depends not at all upon the technical qualities so striking in his earlier work."
St. James's Gazette.

4.—SAN BIAGIO.

“So far removed from any accepted canons of art as to be beyond the understanding of an ordinary mortal.”—*Observer*. ✓

5.—BEAD STRINGERS.

* “Et voilà comme on Ecrit l'histoire.”

“‘Impressionistes,’” *and of these the various schools are represented by Mr. Whistler, Mr. Spencer Stanhope, Mr. Walter Crane, and Mr. Strudwick.*” *

6.—FISH SHOP.

“Those who feel painfully the absence in these works of any feeling for the past glories of Venice.”

“‘Arvy’” *in the Spectator*.

“Whistler is eminently vulgar.”—*Glasgow Herald*.

7.—TURKEYS.

“They say very little to the mind.” —

F. Wedmore.

“It is the artist's pleasure to have them there, and we can't help it.”—*Edinburgh Courant*.

8.—NOCTURNE RIVA.

“The Nocturne is intended to convey an impression of night.”—*P. G. Hamerton*. ✓

“The subject did not admit of any drawing.” —*P. G. Hamerton*. ✓

“We have seen a great many representations of Venetian skies, but never saw one before consisting of brown smoke with clots of ink in diagonal lines.”—

9.—FRUIT STALL.

"The historical or poetical associations of cities have little charm for Mr. Whistler and no place in his art."—

10.—SAN GIORGIO.

"An artist of incomplete performance."—
F. Wedmore.

11.—THE DYER.

"By having as little to do as possible with tone and light and shade, Mr. Whistler evades great difficulties."—P. G. Hamerton.

"All those theoretical principles of the art, of which we have heard so much from Messrs. Haden, Hamerton (?) * and Lalauze, are abandoned."—*St. James's Gazette*.

* "Calling me 'a Mr. Hamerton'—does me no harm—but it is a breach of ordinary good manners in speaking of a well-known writer."

Yours obediently,
P. G. HAMERTON.
Sept. 29, 1880.
To the Editor of the
New York Tribune

12.—NOCTURNE PALACES.

"Pictures in darkness are contradictions in terms."—*Literary World*.

13.—THE DOORWAY.

"There is seldom in his Etchings any large arrangement of light and shade."—

P. G. Hamerton.

"Short, scratchy lines."—*St. James's Gazette*.

"The architectural ornaments and the interlacing bars of the gratings are suggested rather than drawn,"—*St. James' Gazette*.

"Amateur prodige."—*Saturday Review*.

14.—LONG LAGOON.

"We think that London fogs and the muddy old Thames supply Mr. Whistler's needle with subjects more congenial than do the Venetian palaces and lagoons."—*Daily News*.

15.—TEMPLE.

"The work does not feel much."—*Times*.

16.—LITTLE SALUTE.—(DRY POINT.)

"As for the lucubrations of Mr. Whistler, they come like shadows and will so depart, *and it is unnecessary to disquiet one's self about them.*"—

17.—THE BRIDGE.

"These works have been done with a swiftness and dash that precludes anything like care and finish."—

"These Etchings of Mr. Whistler's are nothing like so satisfactory as his earlier Chelsea ones; they neither convey the idea of space nor have they the delicacy of handling and treatment which we see in those."—

"He looked at Venice never in detail."—
F. Wedmore.

18.—WOOL CARDERS.

"They have a merit of their own, and I do not wish to understand it."*—*F. Wedmore.*

19.—UPRIGHT VENICE.

"Little to recommend them save the eccentricity of their titles."—

* Mr. Wedmore is the lucky discoverer of the following—

"Vigour and exquisiteness are denied—are they not?—even to a Velasquez."

20.—LITTLE VENICE.

"The Little Venice is one of the slightest of the series."—*St. James' Gazette*.

"In the Little Venice and Little Lagoon Mr. Whistler has attempted to convey impressions by lines far too few for his purpose."—*Daily News*.

"Our river is naturally full of effects in *black and white and bistre*. Venetian skies and marbles have colour you cannot suggest with a point and some printer's ink."—*Daily News*.

"It is not the Venice of a maiden's fancies."—*'Arry.*"

21.—LITTLE COURT.

"Merely technical triumphs."—*Standard*.

22.—REGENT'S QUADRANT.

"There may be a few who find genius in insanity."—

23.—LOBSTER POTS.

"So little in them." * —*P. G. Hamerton*.

24.—RIVA No. 2.

"In all his former Etchings he was careful to give a strong foundation of firm drawing. In these plates, however, he has cast aside this painstaking method."—*St. James's Gazette*.

25.—ISLANDS.

"An artist who has never mastered the subtleties of accurate form." * —*F. Wedmore*.

* The same Critic holds:
"The Thames is beautiful from Maidenhead to Kew, but not from Battersea to Sheerness."

* Elsewhere Mr. Wedmore is inspired to say—
"The true collector must gradually and painfully acquire the eye to judge of the impression."
This is possibly the process through which the preacher is passing.

26.—THE LITTLE LAGOON.

"Well, little new came of it, in etching; nothing new that was beautiful."—*F. Wedmore.*

27.—NOCTURNE SHIPPING.

"Amazing!"

"This Archimago of the iconographic aoraton, or graphiology of the Hidden."—*Daily Telegraph.*

"Popularity is the only insult that has not yet been offered to Mr. Whistler."—*Oscar Wilde.*

28.—TWO DOORWAYS.

"It is trying to any sketch without tone to be hung upon a wall as these have been."—

P. G. Hamerton.

29.—OLD WOMEN.

"He is never literary."—*P. G. Hamerton.*

30.—RIVA.

* Like Eno's
Fruit Salt or the
"Anti-mal-de-Mer."

"He took from London to Venice * his happy fashion of suggesting lapping water."—

F. Wedmore.

"Even such a well-worn subject as the Riva degli Schiavoni is made original (?) by being taken from a high point of view, and looked at lengthwise, instead of from the canal."—

31.—DRURY LANE.

"In Mr. Whistler's productions one might safely say that there is no culture."—*Athenæum.*

32.—THE BALCONY.

"His colour is subversive."—*Russian Press.*

33.—ALDERNEY STREET.

"The best art may be produced with trouble."
*F. Wedmore.**

* "I am not a Mede nor a Persian."—*F. Wedmore*

34.—THE SMITHY.

"They produce a disappointing impression."—
"His Etchings seem weak when framed." *—
P. G. Hamerton.

* Mr. Hamerton does also say:
"Indifference to beauty is however compatible with splendid success in etching, as the career of Rembrandt proved."—*Etching and Etchers.*

35.—STABLES.

"An unpleasing thing, and framed in Mr. Whistler's odd fashion."—*City Press.*

36.—THE MAST.

"The Mast and the Little Mast are dependent for much of their interest on the drawing of festoons of cord hanging from unequal heights." *
P. G. Hamerton.

* At the service of critics of unequal sizes.

37.—TRAGHETTO.

"The artist's present principles seem to deny him any effective chiaroscuro."—*P. G. Hamerton.*
"Mr. Whistler's figure drawing, generally defective and always incomplete." *—

* "Sometimes generally always."

38.—FISHING BOAT.

"Subjects unimportant in themselves."—
P. G. Hamerton.

39.—PONTE PIOVAN.

"Want of variety in the handling."—*St. James's Gazette.*

40.—GARDEN.

"An art which is happier in the gloom of a doorway than in the glow of the sunshine, and turns with a pleasant blindness from whatsoever in Nature or Man is of perfect beauty or noble thought."—"Arry."

41.—THE RIALTO.

"Mr. Whistler has etched too much for his reputation."—*F. Wedmore.*

* This Critic, it is true, is a Slade Professor.

"Scampering caprice."—*S. Colvin.**

"Mr. Whistler's drawing, which is sometimes that of a very slovenly master."—

42.—LONG VENICE.

"After all, there are certain accepted canons about what constitutes good drawing, good colour, and good painting; and when an artist deliberately sets himself to ignore or violate all of these, it is desirable that his work should not be classed with that of ordinary artists."—"Arry."

43.—NOCTURNE SALUTE.

* ?

"The utter absence, as far as my eye * may be trusted, of gradation."—*F. Wedmore.*

"There are many things in a painter's art which even a photographer cannot understand."
—*Laudatory notice in Provincial Press.*

44.—FURNACE NOCTURNE.

"There is no moral element in his chiaroscuro."
Richmond Eagle.

45.—PIAZETTA.

“Whistler does not take much pains with his work.”—*New York Paper*. ✓✓✓

“A sort of transatlantic impudence in his cleverness.”—

“His pictures do not claim to be accurate.”—

46.—THE LITTLE MAST.

“Form and line are of little account to him.”—

47.—QUIET CANAL.

“Herr Whistler stellt ganz wunderbare Productionen aus, die auf Gesetze der Form und der Farbe gegründet scheinen, die dem Uneinge-
weihten unverständlich sind.”—*Wiener Presse*. ✓✓✓

“This new manner of Mr. Whistler's is no improvement upon that which helped him to win his fame in this field of art.”—

48.—PALACES.

“The absence, seemingly, of any power of drawing the forms of water.”—*F. Wedmore*. ✓✓✓

“He has never, so far as we know, attempted to transfer to copper any of the more ambitious works of the architect.”—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

“He has been content to show us what his eyes can see, and not what his hand can do.”—
St. James's Gazette.

49.—SALUTE DAWN.

“Too sensational.”—*Athenæum*.

“Pushing a single artistic principle to the verge of affectation.”—*Sidney Colvin*.

